

2012 IRC Grading and Drainage

SECTION R401 GENERAL

R401.1 Application.

The provisions of this chapter shall control the design and construction of the foundation and foundation spaces for all buildings. In addition to the provisions of this chapter, the design and construction of foundations in flood hazard areas as established by Table R301.2(1) shall meet the provisions of [Section R322](#). Wood foundations shall be designed and installed in accordance with AF&PA PWF.

Exception: The provisions of this chapter shall be permitted to be used for wood foundations only in the following situations:

1. In buildings that have no more than two floors and a roof.
2. When interior *basement* and foundation walls are constructed at intervals not exceeding 50 feet (15 240 mm).

Wood foundations in Seismic Design Category D₀, D₁ or D₂ shall be designed in accordance with accepted engineering practice.

R401.2 Requirements.

Foundation construction shall be capable of accommodating all loads according to [Section R301](#) and of transmitting the resulting loads to the supporting soil. Fill soils that support footings and foundations shall be designed, installed and tested in accordance with accepted engineering practice. Gravel fill used as footings for wood and precast concrete foundations shall comply with [Section R403](#).

R401.3 Drainage.

Surface drainage shall be diverted to a storm sewer conveyance or other *approved* point of collection that does not create a hazard.

Lots shall be graded to drain surface water away from foundation walls. The *grade* shall fall a minimum of 6 inches (152 mm) within the first 10 feet (3048 mm).

Exception: Where *lot lines*, walls, slopes or other physical barriers prohibit 6 inches (152 mm) of fall within 10 feet (3048 mm), drains or swales shall be constructed to ensure drainage away from the structure. Impervious surfaces within 10 feet (3048 mm) of the building foundation shall be sloped a minimum of 2 percent away from the building.

R404.1.6 Height above finished grade.

Concrete and masonry foundation walls shall extend above the finished *grade* adjacent to the foundation at all points a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) where masonry veneer is used and a minimum of 6 inches (152 mm) elsewhere.

R404.1.7 Backfill placement.

Backfill shall not be placed against the wall until the wall has sufficient strength and has been anchored to the floor above, or has been sufficiently braced to prevent damage by the backfill.

Exception: Bracing is not required for walls supporting less than 4 feet (1219 mm) of unbalanced backfill.